



Honorable Ron Barber of Arizona
Congressional Recognition for
United States Army Command Sergeant Major Martin R. Barreras

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Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor United States Army Command Sergeant Major Martin R. Barreras, who died on May 12, 2014 from wounds he suffered on May 6 when enemy forces attacked his unit with small arms fire in Harat Province, Afghanistan. He leaves behind his wife, Melinda; mother, Gloria; father, Ray; brothers Dave and Andy; three children, Calvin, Victoria and Amice; three grandchildren; and numerous friends.

Born in New Mexico, Command Sergeant Major Barreras spent most of his childhood in Tucson, Arizona. He attended Sunnyside High School before joining the military. In the last assignment of his long military career, he was assigned as the highest-ranking enlisted member of the 2nd Battalion, 5th Infantry Regiment, 3rd Brigade Combat Team based in Fort Bliss, Texas.

Command Sergeant Major Barreras was on his sixth deployment to Afghanistan, after serving 29 honorable years defending our country in both the Army and Marine Corps.

Nicknamed “Gunny” from his time in the Marines, Command Sergeant Major Barreras was a great soldier. Over his career he earned 50 awards and distinctions including a Bronze Star with valor and two Purple Hearts. However, his illustrious career depicted through his medals will not be the only thing to highlight his service to our country. The men and women he led and fought with will always remember his selflessness and war-fighting spirit that will undoubtedly be passed on for generations to come.

As an Army Ranger, he helped rescue former prisoner of war Jessica Lynch from an Iraqi hospital in 2003. Command Sergeant Major Barreras was the leader of the Army battalion that conducted the successful rescue of Lynch. He personally handed Lynch to another soldier to transfer her to the helicopter that evacuated her from the area. Without any hesitation, he then led the fight against multiple attacks in order to retrieve all nine bodies of the other U.S. soldiers missing in action.

We remember Command Sergeant Major Barreras and offer our deepest condolences and sincerest prayers to his family. I am heartsick for their loss and my words cannot offer adequate consolation.

Everyone in our great country owes Command Sergeant Major Barreras and his family a debt of gratitude for his selfless sacrifice and courage. It is vital that we keep our men and women in uniform who are in harm’s way in our thoughts and prayers. I call on my fellow colleagues and all Americans to remember, on this Memorial Day weekend, Command Sergeant Major Barreras and his fellow fallen comrades – those who have paid the ultimate price.